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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8671  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS MANAMA 000283

SIPDIS  
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DEPARTMENT FOR DRL AND NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [BA](#)  
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT NGO PAYS FIRST VISIT TO WOMEN'S PRISON

¶1. (U) Summary: The Bahrain Human Rights Society (BHRS) made a first-of-its-kind visit to Bahrain's women's prison on May 11. BHRS representatives met privately with female prisoners and examined the facility over the course of several hours. BHRS will issue a report on conditions at the prison in June.  
End summary.

¶2. (U) BHRS reached agreement with Interior Minister Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa in April to allow the group to inspect conditions at Bahrain's only women's prison. Local press reported on May 12 that 10 BHRS representatives visited the Isa Town Detention Center the previous day and met privately with 58 inmates selected at random by the BHRS team. BHRS was the first human rights organization to be granted access to the women's prison. In 2005, BHRS was the first human rights group to visit the men's prison at Jaw.

¶3. (SBU) BHRS Secretary General Abdullah Derazi confirmed to poloff on May 13 that prison officials granted the 10 BHRS representatives unimpeded access to the prisoners and facilities. He noted that one of the BHRS team members had over 20 years' experience working in women's prisons in the U.S. Derazi praised the prison officials for their professionalism and said the inspection "went exactly as it should." He explained that the team members had checklists for each of the 58 interviews and for the facilities' inspection. Compiling this information and consulting with the Interior Ministry will take approximately one month, and Derazi anticipated that the report would be released in late June. He would not speculate on the content of the final report because the data had not yet been analyzed, but Derazi was upbeat and allowed that he was "very pleased" with the visit.

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